MISSIONS
in the
SUNDAY SCHOOL

Promoting Intelligence
and the
Spirit of Giving

By

CHARLES H. DANIELS

ENVELOPE SERIES — A QUARTERLY
Vol. V., No. 3 — October, 1902

Entered at the Post Office, Boston, Mass., as second-class matter

PLEASE READ AND CIRCULATE

ENVELOPE SERIES
Vol. V., No. 3

A QUARTERLY
October, 1902

Missions in the Sunday School

PROMOTING INTELLIGENCE AND THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

BY

CHARLES H. DANIELS

Secretary

An address delivered before the International Sunday School Convention, Denver, Colorado, June 29, 1902

PUBLISHED BY THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

Annual Subscription, 10 Cents

Address, CHARLES E. SWETT, Congregational House
14 Beacon Street, BOSTON, MASS.

Entered at the Post Office, Boston, Mass., as second-class matter

PREFACE.

This number of the Envelope Series contains the address delivered by Rev. Charles H. Daniels, D.D., at the International Sunday-school Convention held in Denver, Col., on June 29, 1902.

The training of the young people in the Sunday-schools for the mission work is of the greatest moment, as it relates to the future of the churches. The topic is a timely one in connection with the Sunday-school Foreign Missionary Day appointed for the last Sunday in October (see page 15). We trust the pastors of the churches and the superintendents of the Sunday-schools will take deep interest in the questions involved.

Missions in the Sunday-School

PROMOTING INTELLIGENCE AND THE SPIRIT OF GIVING.

THE primary work of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ is the evangelization of the world. This is the foremost and central duty. It is also what the late Dr. Storrs called "its prodigious task."

One of the most impressive questions which has been asked me in many a day was this: "Can you go to the Tenth International Sunday-School Convention? It embraces every state, province, territory, and possession in North America: a constituency of nearly fifteen million officers, teachers, and scholars. Two thousand delegates and workers will be in attendance." To meet this company is no light matter. Here are teachers, students, and pupils of the Word of God, a mighty host of the Lord, with all the possibilities of power to move the world onward to the world's Redeemer. We stand amazed, humbled and cheered before this vast company, — the great cloud of witnesses, shall I say?

The children will be what their leaders make them. They are ready and eager to

do good. Nothing catches the heart of a child so quickly as the need of the world. These earnest men and women, when they shall so decide, may set the children on fire with missionary zeal, thus hastening the day of the Lord among all people.

The future defenders of the faith are now in the Sabbath schools. The two proverbs, "It is hard to teach old dogs new tricks," and "As the twig is bent so is the tree inclined," suggest to us that here is the place for a missionary training. The boys and girls of to-day will be "put to" in this matter. The youth of to-day will be the warriors of to-morrow in the mission cause. In order to promote the spirit of missions there must be distinct objects kept in view in our Sabbath schools. What are these objects?

THE APPEAL OF GOD'S WORD.

(1) *We must implant in the hearts of the children God's purposes and commands about missionary work.* It is a cause for surprise that so many lessons in the Sabbath school enforce the importance of the missionary cause. Large portions of the Word of God fairly blaze with missionary zeal. With such a Bible, a great missionary book, it is for the superintendent and teacher to be on the lookout for these things, and so teach its truths that the child shall be impressed with the idea of winning the world to Christ. We see what we look for in the Bible, and if we desire to develop an interest in the missionary enterprise we can find abundant material. The late studies in the book of the Acts of the Apostles ought to bring a

mighty impulse to the cause dear to the heart of the Master. If it does not, where shall the blame lie? Every Sabbath should bring one of the great fundamental ideas of the Kingdom before the children in the Sabbath schools. Read the Sermon on the Mount and then the parables of Christ, and we are in a missionary atmosphere. Read the epistles of the missionaries sent forth by the Holy Ghost, and lo, we are standing on missionary ground. Go back to prophecy, — "I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance"; "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth"; "They shall fear thee . . . throughout all generations"; "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"; "All nations shall flow into the house of the Lord"; "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"; "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." These martial words appeal to the child. Hardly a session of the school passes that we do not say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." The commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We must not hesitate so long as the nations in darkness, struggling up to the light, are crying, "Come over and help us." Some one has said, "Children always write with indelible ink. If the mind is wax to receive, it is adamant to retain impressions." How can the Sabbath schools contribute to the establishment, growth, enlargement or improvement of the missionary enterprise? First of all, by bringing the appeals of God's

Word, in its promises and commands concerning his Kingdom, to the apprehension and acceptance of the young.

INTELLIGENCE.

(2) *We must impart to the minds of the children the missionary intelligence of the day.* The *facts* of the missionary work must in some way be inculcated. In a report of a committee, of which Dr. Samuel B. Capen of Boston was the chairman, which report was adopted by the National Council of the Congregational Churches, we find these words: "It is of great importance that time should be given in our Sunday-schools for definite missionary education. A study of missions should have a place in every Sunday-school course, and the individual teacher should give a large place to it. . . . Provision for this study should be universal in our churches."

At the last conference of the representatives of the Foreign Missionary Boards of the United States and Canada, after a careful discussion of the matter, a memorial was prepared and ordered sent to this very convention, requesting the most earnest consideration of the question of providing lessons on missions in the Sunday-schools. What will be your wise answer?

The honored Methodist body in this country made a most sagacious move when every one of its Sunday-schools was organized into a missionary society that it might be trained in its denominational missionary work.

The Protestant Episcopal Church, with equal sagacity, started a movement a year

or more ago, whose definite purpose was to raise, through its Sunday-schools, one hundred thousand dollars for missions. The movement was successful.

The American Baptist Missionary Union has made an excellent beginning in the preparation of missionary lessons for its Sunday-schools, which have had a welcome in hundreds of their schools.

The American Board of the Congregational Churches has inaugurated a Foreign Missionary Sunday in October, and gives to its schools concert exercises and other material for the sake of information and inspiration.

These cases are named to indicate that there is a movement in the churches towards the training of the Sabbath schools in the fundamental mission of the Church of Christ. The time is coming when every pastor, Sabbath-school superintendent and teacher, as a qualification for his position, must be intelligent upon the missionary work of his church.

But, some one will ask, how can this method of instruction be carried on? We are familiar with a Sabbath school which has a missionary object every Sabbath in the year. Its plan is to secure some one, usually from its own number, to briefly tell the school some facts in regard to the object named for the day. The influence of these littles will count in the shaping of many lives. Certainly this much can be done in any school, however small or feeble.

Another school has this plan, — six times each year, in alternating months, contributions are made by the church for the six societies of its denomination. The large

Sunday-school is the training place for this effort. Two Sundays before the collection, leaflets are distributed through the school and questions asked in order to awaken interest. The following Thursday the teachers' meeting is carefully instructed by a prepared leader upon this same cause. The next Sunday is a mission-study Sunday. Each class is taught for a portion of the time by its own teacher on the subject in hand. The pastor closes with a review, and literature is distributed through the whole congregation. Every one is prepared. The least child is instructed. All are able to do their part willingly and intelligently. This is a unifying, cumulative, systematic and far-reaching process of promoting intelligence. Is there any better plan in theory, or one likely to be more successful in practice? What would be the happy result if such a course, fostered by this organization, dwelt upon in all the lesson helps, enlarged through the effort of the missionary boards and improved by practice and experience, should be followed in the next years of the uniform study of the Bible?

There would follow, as the effect follows a cause, the enlargement of the missionary library, the printing of brief manuals of information of world-wide character, and the circulation of the periodicals of the missionary boards. Books of a missionary character were never more fascinating, information was never so closely at hand, and the magazines for children give a wealth of inspiration.

We sincerely hope that Decision Day will have a large place in the schools of the country. Beside it we would place a grand

Missionary Anniversary, — the one inviting to personal obedience, the other to consecrated service.

"Knowledge of missions is an education in itself." The Sunday-school leader is not educated without it. We must have a good missionary magazine, and then consult the bookshelves for history, geography, literature and religion in many lands. Then will burst upon the vision of the Church the magnitude and beauty of this service. Its facts are more striking than fiction, and intensely fascinating, — a sure cure for dulness in the class, a fine illustration of divine truth, a practical answer to skeptical inquiry. The Sunday-schools *need* this study, even if they do not want it; but they will *want* it when it dawns upon them as the natural evolution of the teaching of the Word of God.

GIVING.

(3) *We must cultivate in the lives of the children the principles and habits of giving.* The facts of need and success correlate with giving. The purposes already named as worthy the Sabbath school will promote the spirit of giving. The converse is also true, that giving stimulates inquiry. The principles of giving are as wide as the world. God's best gifts are givers. Light pours out with unchanging liberality. The waters are ever in motion to give life. Take any gift of God and it reaches the end of its being by giving. Teacher, tell it again and yet again, with pathos and with unction; tell it until the heart of the child shall throb with emotion deep and tender, that "God so loved

the world, that he *gave* his only begotten Son." Tell it over and over that Christ has said, "The water that I shall *give* him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." The Sabbath should not pass without teaching or exemplifying the grace of giving. Hear what the Lord saith, —"It is more blessed to give than to receive"; "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver"; "Freely ye have received, freely give." The true leader must practice, illustrate and proclaim these things out of his own experience. "Give, and it shall be given unto you." "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Thus in his giving, the child is not helping a cause so much as he is being helped. The service of giving makes the whole life a benefaction to the world. There are interests of the Kingdom of God which are languishing to-day because this law is not obeyed. The children of to-day, the generation of to-morrow, must be trained to give, as well as to study, pray and praise.

How shall we do this? (1) The superintendent who pleads for pennies for the dear Lord and then uses the Lord's pennies for the lesson quarterlies and current expenses is in error. The bright boy feels that he has been cheated, and instead of having made a gift, he has paid his just dues, as a manly boy desires to do. (2) Measuring the gifts by the color of the coin or its size is not wise, but rather by the "relative greatness of the sacrifice, and the purity of the motive."

The method is a plain one if with the heart we undertake it. *First*, Press the duty of giving, for in it is the life of the child. The child untaught in the principle of giving is untrained in the practice of giving. *Secondly*, Show the urgency of the need. This need looks out to the world with its immortal interests and inward to the heart of the child with his own longings. Hang a map; point to the millions without God and hope in the world; bring out the history and with it stir the child-life with longings for conquest. Point out a Neesima, a heathen boy searching for God, on these shores alone; or the family in your own city or town suffering for companionship and sympathy; or a nation like China before whose rage lives are licked out on the forked tongue of fire, or stricken by the blade of steel. Stop the boy in his play and the girl in her thinking and ask them to listen. They will hear the pathetic cry, "Come and help us." *Thirdly*, Adopt a clear system, and work it with enthusiasm. Give to this exercise an hallowed portion of time. Bring the hush of a great quiet upon the school; allow no other thought, but with a prayer and a song and a message from the Word of God fill the brief moments with worship. There are thousands who do not give, because they are waiting for an opportunity. Let the school have its wisest member for treasurer, and let every class have its livest pupil for its treasurer, and let every scholar, for his good, be pledged to give. One class will use the mite-box or the bank; another will use a class envelope; and others will have an envelope for every child, and all the giving will

blend into the life and plans of the church itself. Study, work or play must have a system, and so likewise must the grace of giving.

OUTLINE PLAN.

If these suggestions have value in defining the duties and privileges, the principles and methods of missionary service, we may outline a simple plan which may be practicable, with local modifications, in every school in the land.

(1) Let the Bible be the living missionary book, the constitution and by-laws of the Kingdom of God on earth.

(2) Let every Sabbath school be organized as a missionary society, with its own name, as an auxiliary to the missionary activities of the church.

(3) Let the object of the society be to promote the interests of the missionary cause among the members of the school.

(4) All members of the school shall be members of the society.

(5) The society shall have its own officers with distinct duties, who shall also act as the executive board of the society.

(6) The executive board shall provide for the exercises of the school and engage as many as possible in acquiring and supplying information and interest on missionary themes. They shall also put in operation methods, — mite-boxes, envelopes, collection cards or other appliances for increasing missionary gifts.

(7) Each class shall be an auxiliary of the society, with its own name, or number,

its teacher its leader, and with its own treasurer.

(8) In many cases a part of the session of the school once each month may be set apart for gathering up the results of the month in interest and gifts. In other cases at least four meetings may be held in the year, in which to review the lessons and gather the offerings for the quarter.

(9) This should not interfere with the weekly lesson for information, inspiration and worship in giving.

(10) The great prayer of the missionary church should be taught to every child and offered at every gathering of the school, — "That God will now pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of our God."

Is this impractical or impossible? We have known this method, in substance, put into effective use in a number of schools and always with blessing. It has already been discovered by many of you that we have told the story of method and practice, with such modifications as local surroundings will call for, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. God bless that body of Christians! That the plan is successful is shown in the fact that last year the Sabbath schools of this denomination gave over *four hundred thousand dollars* to the missionary cause.

THE BIBLE FOR THE WORLD.

For a moment we are on the mount of vision. We look about us and see 452 versions of the Word of God, in whole or in

part, which are now in use by peoples of as many languages and dialects. Upon the marvelous spectacle, a magnificent outcome of missionary work, fifteen millions of our Sunday-school friends are gazing. Volume after volume is examined only to find that it does not speak to us. Other millions are seen to whom these volumes speak in various tongues. We are in a moment back again at Pentecost, "with one accord in one place." Again is heard the sound from heaven "as of a mighty rushing wind"; it fills the place, the men are spirit-filled and they speak with the miracle of tongues; "every man heard them speak in his own language." Amazing, marvelous day! Here, too, in the 452 versions of the Bible in as many tongues, inspired, circulated and read under the same Holy Ghost, we witness again, in greater power and in wider range, another miracle of tongues. We thank God, as we pray to Him, that we may, as our final missionary object, *awaken in the souls of the Sabbath-school children a passion to give the Word of God to the whole world.*

Sunday-School Foreign Missions Day, October 26, 1902.

The American Board is putting forth special efforts to deepen interest in foreign missions in our Sunday-schools, and also to enlarge the contributions from the same source. While many of our schools have joined heartily in these efforts, the large majority have not as yet entered into these plans. We believe it would be for the spiritual good of all our schools to engage in foreign missionary work in connection with the American Board. The Board at its last annual meeting voted to set apart the last Sabbath in October of each year as a Foreign Mission Day in the Sunday-schools. Already we have sent notices to the pastors and superintendents telling them of our plans and seeking their cooperation. We hope to secure at least $50,000 from the Sunday-schools of the Congregational churches. In fact, were all the schools to give as the few are now giving, it would amount to at least $80,000.

We therefore cordially invite the pastors, superintendents and friends of our Congregational Sunday-schools to unite in earnest efforts to bring the cause of missions before every school, and to make an offering to the important work.

IMPORTANT NOTES.

1.—

Send contributions for the work of the American Board to

FRANK H. WIGGIN, Treasurer,
Congregational House,
Boston.

2.—

The literature, leaflets and letters of the American Board may be had by addressing

MR. CHARLES E. SWETT, Congregational House, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Or at the Offices of the District Secretaries:

REV. C. C. CREEGAN, D. D., 4th Avenue and 22d Street, New York City.

REV. A. N. HITCHCOCK, Ph.D., 153 La Salle Street, Chicago, Ill.

3.—

"THE MISSIONARY HERALD."

Single subscriptions, 75 cents; in clubs of ten, 50 cents each.

4.—

FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give, devise and bequeath unto the "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," incorporated in Massachusetts in 1812, the sum of .....Dollars, to be expended for the appropriate objects of said corporation.